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Homoepitaxial growth rate studies on diamond (110), (111), and (100) surfaces in  
a hot-filament reactor

by

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# HOMOEPI TAXIAL GROWTH RATE STUDIES ON DIAMOND (110), (111), AND (100) SURFACES IN A HOT-FILAMENT REACTOR

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## ABSTRACT

Growth rates of homoepitaxial (110), (111), and (100) diamond films were experimentally determined, for the first time, in a hot filament reactor using methane and carbon tetrachloride as the carbon source. Methane concentrations from 0.07% to 1.03 % in  $H_2$  were studied at a substrate temperature of 970°C. Growth rates were found to be crystal-face dependent with respect to methane concentration, being linear or first order for the (100)-orientation, sublinear for (110), and sigmoidal for (111). The observed growth kinetics of (111) suggest the viability of an acetylene mechanism for (111), along with the methyl radical mechanism at methane concentrations above 0.73%.  $CCl_4$  concentrations from 0.06% to 0.69% in  $H_2$  were also investigated at a substrate temperature of 970°C. Growth rate behavior was similar to that of methane for all three crystal faces.

The temperature dependence of the growth rates was also crystal-orientation dependent. At substrate temperatures above 730°C, growth rates are thought to be mainly transport limited, yielding effective activation energies of  $8\pm3$ ,  $18\pm2$ , and  $12\pm4$  kcal/mole for (100), (110), and (111) orientations, respectively. At substrate temperatures below 730°C, growth rates are thought to be surface reaction rate-limited, with an overall effective activation energy of  $50\pm19$  kcal/mole for the three crystal-orientations studied.

## Introduction

It is well known in the chemical vapor deposition of polycrystalline diamond films that the final film morphology is very sensitive to growth conditions such as substrate temperature and methane concentration. There have been reports of changes in the crystal faces from (111) to (100) as well as from (100) to (111) with increasing substrate temperature.<sup>1-3</sup> With increasing methane concentration, the morphology changes from predominantly (111) at low concentrations, to cubo-octahedron ((111) and (100)), to predominantly (100) at high concentrations (3-6%  $CH_4$ ).<sup>1-2,4-6</sup> Clearly a detailed study of the growth kinetics is needed. Due to the complexity of polycrystalline diamond growth, and the fact that the modeling of diamond growth has all been performed on single faces of diamond such as (110),<sup>7</sup> (111),<sup>8-10</sup> and (100),<sup>11-12</sup> a study of the growth kinetics of homoepitaxial (100), (111), and (110) diamond films is therefore warranted. We have previously reported the growth of homoepitaxial (111), (100), and (110) diamond films in our hot filament reactor in identifying the precursor for diamond growth.<sup>13</sup> We now present the results of our growth rate studies on (110), (111), and (100) diamonds.

## Experimental

The hot-filament chemical vapor deposition chamber used for these studies has been described in detail previously.<sup>14</sup> A diagram detailing the position of the diamond substrates relative to the filaments, the methane injection port, and the gas sampling port is illustrated in Figure 1. The experimental conditions are listed in Table I. Five strands of 5 mil tungsten wire at 2160°C (measured by optical pyrometry) were used for hydrogen activation. Methane was injected either with the hydrogen above the hot filaments or below the filaments near the substrate, with 10 sccm of  $H_2$ . The experiments with  $CCl_4$  were performed by injection under the filaments with 10 sccm of  $H_2$ . The (110), (111), and (100) diamond substrates were type 2A natural diamond windows from Dubbledee Harris, 1.5 x 1.5 x 0.1 mm in dimension. The diamonds were mounted side-by-side on a 6 mil-thick platinum ribbon which functions as a holder and heater. Circular holes, 0.05 mm in diameter, were cut in the platinum ribbon under

the diamond windows which enabled the platinum ribbon to function simultaneously as an IR holder. During growth, the holes were covered with thin-foil platinum (3 mil thick) to prevent growth on the bottom side of the diamond substrates. The temperature of the substrates were measured by a Pt/Pt13%Rh thermocouple spot-welded on the platinum ribbon between the diamonds. The growth rate measurements were performed by growing the diamond films at a given CH<sub>4</sub> concentration and substrate temperature for 1 hour (0.5 hr for CCl<sub>4</sub>), then removing the platinum ribbon and measuring the changes in thickness of the diamond windows from the interference fringes in transmission FTIR with the equation  $d = (2n)^{-1}[(1/\lambda_2) - (1/\lambda_1)]^{-1}$  where

$d$  = thickness of the diamond,  
 $\lambda$  = frequency,  
 $n$  = index of refraction of diamond.

The thickness measurements were averaged from 1000 to 600 cm<sup>-1</sup> and a 0.1 mm accuracy in the thickness calculations was obtained.

**Table I. Experimental Conditions**

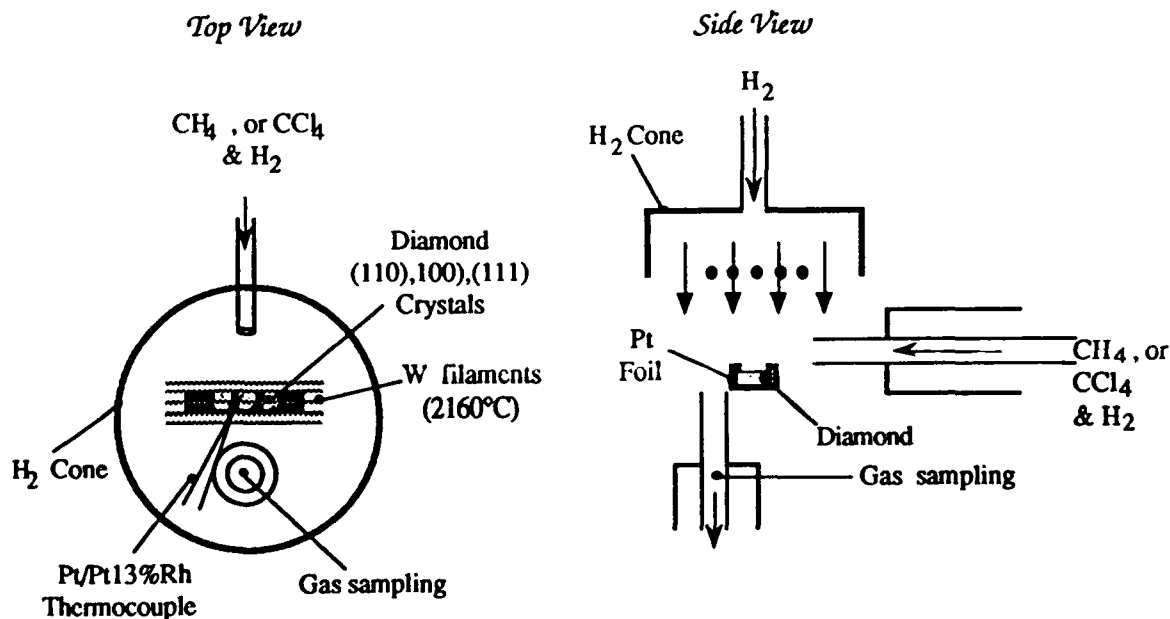
Concentration study:

H <sub>2</sub> (over filaments)	150 sccm
H <sub>2</sub> (below filaments) (when injecting CH <sub>4</sub> below the filaments)	10 sccm
CH <sub>4</sub> flow	0.1 - 1.3 sccm
CCl <sub>4</sub> flow	0.1 - 1.1 sccm
chamber pressure	25 torr
substrate temperature	970°C
filament temperature	2160°C
substrate to filament distance	10 mm

Substrate temperature study

hydrogen gas (over filaments)	150 sccm
CH <sub>4</sub> flow	0.6 sccm
chamber pressure	25 torr
substrate temperature	1000-600°C
filament temperature	2160°C
substrate to filament distance	10 mm

**Figure 1. Diamond substrates in the CVD chamber**

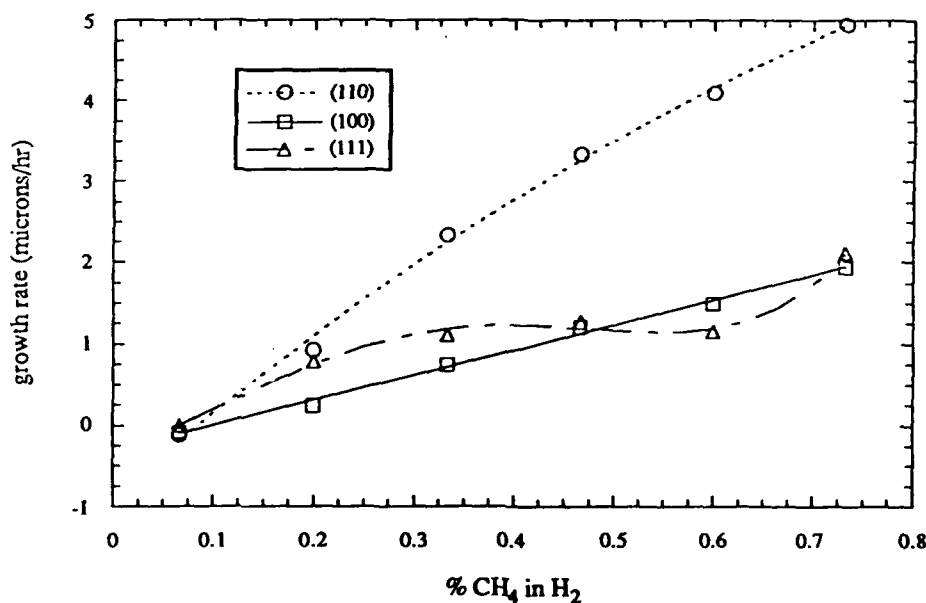


## Results and Discussion

### Dependence of growth rates relative to concentration

The dependence of (110), (111), and (100) diamond growth rates on  $\text{CH}_4$  concentration is shown in Figure 2 where  $\text{CH}_4$  and  $\text{H}_2$  were introduced above the filaments. Methane concentrations from 0.07% to 1.03 % in  $\text{H}_2$  were studied at a substrate temperature of  $970^\circ\text{C}$ . Growth rates were found to be crystal-face dependent. Linear or first order growth rates were observed for (100) diamond films with respect to methane concentration. (110) was the fastest growing crystal-face, exhibiting a sublinear functional dependence on methane concentration. A sigmoidal dependence was observed for (111)-oriented diamond films where the growth rate became relatively insensitive to methane concentration from 0.33% to 0.60%. This insensitivity to methane concentration implies a saturation of  $\text{CH}_3$  radical coverage on the (111) surface, presumably due to the large steric effects in achieving clusters of  $\text{CH}_3$  on (111).<sup>15</sup> Small variations in methane concentration can change the relative growth rates of (111) and (100). At very low methane concentrations (below 0.48%), the growth rate of (111) is faster than (100); from 0.48% to 0.72 %, (100) is faster than (111); and above 0.72 %, (111) becomes again the faster growing orientation. This phenomena is consistent with polycrystalline film growth where it is widely known that small changes in the growth conditions can change the final film morphology either from (111) to (100) or from (100) to (111).

Figure 2. Diamond homoepitaxy growth rate study  
 $\text{CH}_4$  introduced above the filaments



The observed relative insensitivity of (111) to methane or methyl radical concentration, coupled with a linear rise in growth rates at higher methane concentrations, imply the existence of another growth mechanism besides the methyl radical mechanism for the (111) crystal face. It can be postulated that acetylene may become equally as important as the methyl radical for (111) film growth at high methane concentrations. From gas phase analysis, we have observed a near second-order dependence of acetylene on methane concentration, where at high methane flow rates, the relative concentrations of acetylene becomes greater than that of methane. These simultaneous increases in (111) growth rate and acetylene concentration suggest a complex growth mechanism for the (111) crystal face.

Results from growth rates studies with  $\text{CH}_4$  and  $\text{CCl}_4$  injected below the filaments are illustrated in Figures 3 and 4, respectively. Figure 3 is a combined plot of the above-filament and below-filament  $\text{CH}_4$  injection where the  $\text{CH}_4$  concentrations for below-filament injection have been multiplied by 1.4. This is an experimentally derived factor to compensate for the higher localized  $\text{CH}_4$  concentrations for below-filament injections. Similar results and interpretations of diamond growth mechanisms are obtained for the below-filament studies as for

the above-filament methane studies. Homoepitaxial diamond film growth with  $\text{CCl}_4$  appears to be similar to that of  $\text{CH}_4$  under the experimental conditions related in this study.

Figure 3. Diamond homoepitaxy growth rate study of  $\text{CH}_4$  injected above (open symbols) and below (filled symbols) the filaments

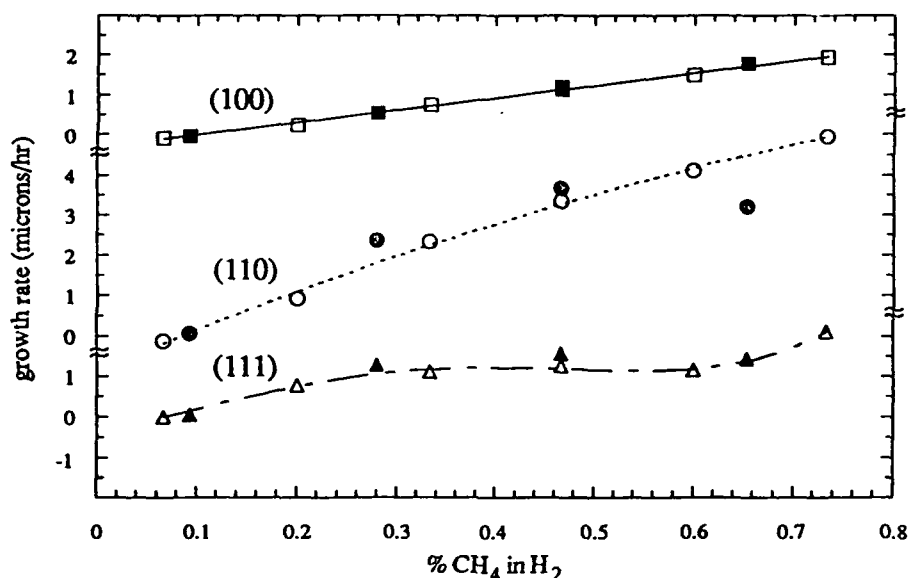
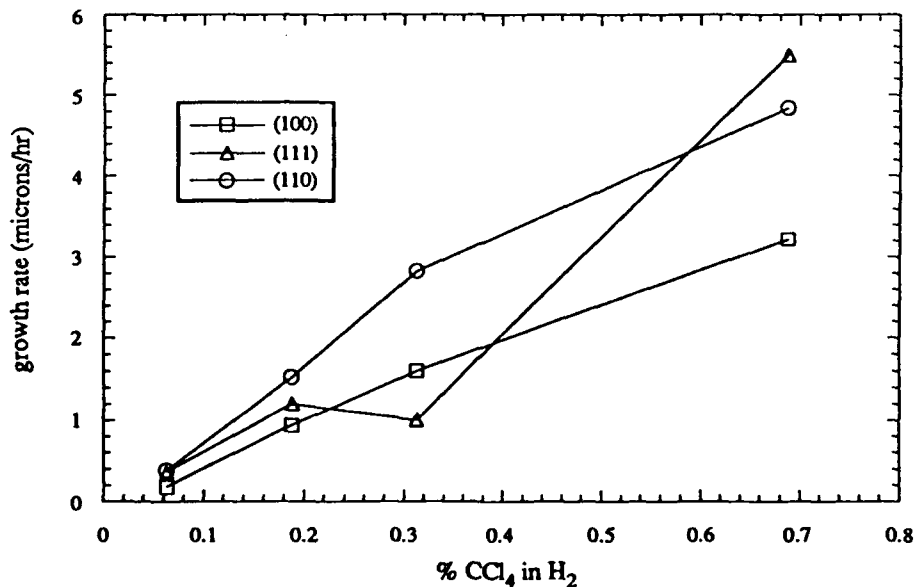


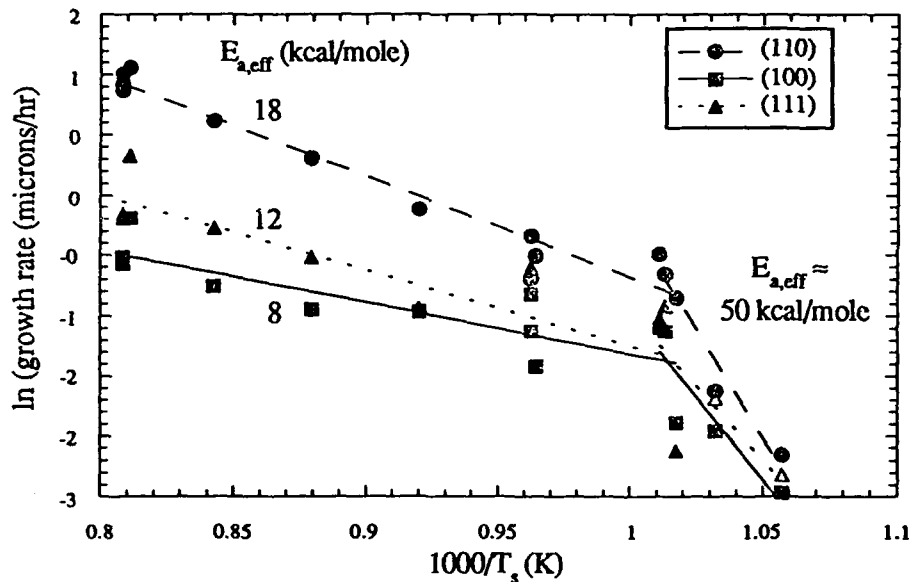
Figure 4. Diamond homoepitaxy growth rate study with  $\text{CCl}_4$  as the carbon source



#### Dependence of growth rate on substrate temperature

The effects of substrate temperature on growth rates were studied at a  $\text{CH}_4$  concentration of 0.4%. The results are illustrated in Figure 5. Two temperature dependent regions were observed. At substrate temperatures above  $730^\circ\text{C}$ , growth rates are weakly temperature dependent. This behavior is typical of that observed for the chemical vapor deposition of single crystal silicon.<sup>16</sup> When surface reaction rates are fast relative to the transport of reactants to the growth surface, transport becomes the rate-limiting step, thus growth rates are not as sensitive to temperature. In this transport-limited region, the temperature dependence of the growth rates

Figure 5. Temperature dependence study of growth rates



was found to be somewhat crystal-face dependent. Different effective activation energies of  $8 \pm 3$ ,  $18 \pm 2$ , and  $12 \pm 4$  kcal/mole were calculated for the (100), (110), and (111) orientations, respectively. These differences suggest that reaction rates are not entirely determined by transport limitations.

At substrate temperatures below  $730^\circ\text{C}$ , growth rates are highly temperature dependent. At the lower substrate temperatures, surface reactions become slow relative to transport, thus growth rates become strongly temperature dependent, yielding an overall effective activation energy of  $50 \pm 19$  kcal/mole for the three crystal-orientations studied. Due to the high scatter of the data, the relative activation energies for (110), (111), and (100) can not be differentiated.

### Conclusions

To summarize, growth rates of homoepitaxial (110), (111), and (100) diamond films were experimentally determined for the first time. Methane and carbon tetrachloride were used as the carbon source in a hot filament reactor. Growth rates were found to be crystal-face dependent with respect to methane concentration, being linear or first order for the (100)-orientation, sublinear for (110), and sigmoidal for (111). The behavior of (111) growth rates suggests a viable acetylene-methyl radical mechanism for the (111) crystal-face. Growth rate behavior with  $\text{CCl}_4$  was similar to that of methane for all three crystal faces.

Two rate-limiting temperature regions were found in the temperature dependent growth rate studies. At substrate temperatures above  $730^\circ\text{C}$ , growth rates are thought to be transport limited and crystal-orientation dependent, yielding effective activation energies of  $8 \pm 3$ ,  $18 \pm 2$ , and  $12 \pm 4$  kcal/mole for (100), (110), and (111) orientations, respectively. At substrate temperatures below  $730^\circ\text{C}$ , growth rates are thought to be surface reaction rate-limited, with an overall effective activation energy of  $50 \pm 19$  kcal/mole for the three crystal-orientations studied.

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